

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

5. (Amended) The hub according to claim 1, wherein each damper is selectively switched from the first spring rate to the second spring [damping] rate upon landing of the aircraft.

17. (Amended) A rotor hub assembly for a rotary-wing aircraft, comprising:

a central member;

a plurality of blade [grips] attachment members adapted for attaching rotor blades to the central member, the blade [grips] attachment members being pivotally attached to the central member and capable of pivoting about a pivot axis generally normal to a plane of rotation of the blades, the pivoting allowing for in-plane motion of the blades relative to the central member; and

a damper operably connected to an inner end of each blade [grip] attachment member for damping the in-plane motion of the associated blade, each damper [being] having valve means for controlling the flow of fluid within the damper to allow the damper to be selectively switchable between at least two spring rates and a damping rate associated with each spring rate.

18. (Hereby Cancelled)

19. (Hereby Cancelled)

20. (Hereby Cancelled)

21. (Hereby Cancelled)

22. (Amended) A proprotor assembly for a tiltrotor aircraft, the assembly comprising:

a central member;

a plurality of blade attachment members;

a plurality of blades;

a flapping hinge connecting an inner portion of each blade attachment member to the central member, each flapping hinge having an axis generally parallel to a plane of rotation of the assembly and providing for out-of plane motion of the corresponding blade attachment member;

a lead/lag hinge connecting each blade to the blade attachment member, each lead/lag hinge having an axis generally normal to the plane of rotation of the assembly and providing for in-plane motion of the blade relative to the blade attachment member, the axes being non-coincident; and

a blade strap that encircles each flapping hinge and a bearing of the associated lead/lag hinge, each blade strap being a unitary loop.

Please add the following new claims:

24. (New) The proprotor assembly according to claim 22, wherein the blade strap is oriented to extend out of the plane of rotation of the assembly.

25. (New) The proprotor assembly according to claim 22, further comprising:

a damper operably connected to each blade attachment member for damping the in-plane motion of the associated blade, each damper being selectively switchable between at least first and second spring rates.

26. (New) A rotor for a rotary-wing aircraft, the rotor assembly comprising:

a central member;

a plurality of blade attachment members adapted for attaching rotor blades to the central member, the blade attachment members being pivotally attached to the central member and capable of pivoting about a pivot axis generally normal to a plane of rotation of the blades, the pivoting allowing for in-plane motion of the blades relative to the central member; and

a damper having a housing and a piston movably carried within the housing, the piston having fluid passages therethrough and valve means for controlling the flow of fluid through at least one of the passages, the piston being sealingly

connected to an inner surface of the housing with deformable elements, the deformable elements allowing movement of the piston relative to the housing through elastic shearing of the deformable elements, the deformable elements also being deformable by a force exerted by the piston on a fluid in communication with the deformable elements through bulging deformation of the deformable elements, the valve means allowing for selective switching between a first spring rate, in which elastic shearing provides a dominant spring force, and a second spring rate, in which bulging deformation provides the dominant spring force;

wherein each damper is operably connected to an inner end of each blade attachment member for damping the in-plane motion of the associated blade.

Replacement Sheets for the claims are enclosed herewith.

The Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments add no new matter to the application.